

Current major event

Strategic Framework for prevention and control of emerging and epidemic-prone infectious diseases

WHO in consultation with Member States and experts, developed a 5-year regional strategic framework for the Eastern Mediterranean Region with the aim of building the capacity of Member States to better prevent, detect, respond to emerging and epidemic-prone infectious diseases through improving preparedness, promoting evidence-based interventions, guidance and best practices for control of infectious diseases.

Editorial note

In the past decades, the Eastern Mediterranean Region has become an epicenter for emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. In addition to protracted humanitarian emergencies, there are many other factors that affect the survival, reproduction and distribution of high risk pathogens, as well as their vectors and hosts. These factors coupled with climate change, microbial evolution, human population movements and rapid urbanization, especially in poor urban slum areas, contribute to the increased frequency and severity of emerging infectious diseases outbreaks in the Region. The Region also hosts annual mass gathering for religious, sporting and other events that increase the risk of spreading infectious diseases in the region and globally. At least 12 of the 22 countries in the Region have reported major outbreaks and epidemics in the last two years which have had the potential to spread globally, including avian influenza A(H5N1), MERS-CoV, yellow fever, RVF, monkey pox, CCHF, dengue, chikungunya and cholera.

Many disease-specific strategies have been launched in the Region, however, to date, but this is the first time a comprehensive framework was developed for prevention and control of multiple emerging infectious diseases specific to the region. This framework has been aligned to the existing disease-specific strategies, in addition to other key regional and global tools. The development of this framework started in 2018 and was based on evidence gathered from various sources, including; review of existing strategic documents, policies and guidelines developed by WHO and other leading organi-

Strategic framework at a Glance: Vision, Objectives, Outcomes and Goals



Strategic Priorities

1. Strengthen public health capacity to prepare for and prevent the emerging and epidemic-prone infections
2. Strengthen capacity for early detection and investigation to outbreaks of emerging and epidemic-prone diseases
3. Build capacity to implement high-impact control strategies for rapid response to high risk emerging and epidemic prone infections
4. Enhance knowledge management and innovation

zations, published reports and data and journal papers; Member States' experiences, regional and global experts' advice.

The main goal of the framework is to increase capacities, capabilities, and preparedness of countries to better forecast, detect, prevent and control emerging and epidemic-prone diseases, so that: national and international spread is prevented; rapid response to contain is effective and efficient; the impact is minimized; the recovery is quick; and the risk of reoccurrence is mitigated (*see figure*). Four strategic priorities (*see list*) and 15 strategic components support the vision of the strategic framework and outline a way forward to attain its high-level outcomes by 2023 targets. To ensure the effectiveness of the framework, the progress of implementation will be monitored at a national and regional level through a set of progress and performance indicators.

WHO urges Member States to adopt the framework to the local context and ensure coordination, planning, implementation, monitoring and periodic reporting at a national level.

Update on outbreaks

in the Eastern Mediterranean Region

MERS in Saudi Arabia; **cholera** in Somalia; **cholera** in Yemen; **Multidrug-resistant typhoid fever** in Pakistan.

Current public health events of concern

[cumulative N° of cases (deaths), CFR %]

Avian influenza: 2006-2017

Egypt (A/H5N1)	[359 (122), 33.98%]
Egypt (A/H9N2)	[4 (0)]

Ebola virus disease (EVD): 2018-2019

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)	[3 116 (2 090), 67.07%]
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Cholera: 2017-2019

Somalia	[8 719 (46) , 0.53%]
Yemen	[2 014 110 (3 588), 0.18%]

Diphtheria: 2018-2019

Yemen	[3 906 (218), 5.58%]
Bangladesh	[8 765 (45), 0.51%]

MERS: 2012-2019

Saudi Arabia	[2 073 (772), 37.24%]
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Multidrug-resistant typhoid fever: 2016-2019

Pakistan	[10 825 (0)]
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